



Congressman Jon Porter

# Monthly Update

June 2004

## Porter Report – Monthly Update



As your Representative in Congress, I am proud to represent Nevada's Third Congressional District, one of the fastest growing regions in the United States.

During the most recent Congressional District Work Period I had the opportunity to hold several events in Southern Nevada including a Business Development Conference. I also participated in a Congressional Field Hearing on

gasoline prices in the West, an important issue for anyone who has been to the gas pumps lately.

I hope you enjoy this months edition of my newsletter and I look forward to hearing from you with any questions or comments.

## House Passes Porter Bill: Child Credit Preservation and Expansion Act of 2004



Congressman Porter sponsored *The Child Tax Credit Preservation and Expansion Act of 2004* to make the child tax credit permanent.

On May 20, the US House of Representatives passed my legislation to permanently extend the Child Tax Credit. As part of the 2001 and 2003 Bush tax cuts, Congress increased the child credit from \$500 to \$1000. If the 2003 tax credit is not extended, it will drop to \$700 next year and to \$500 in 2012.

I was proud to be the lead sponsor and introduce *The Child Tax Credit Preservation and Expansion Act of 2004* (HR 4359) which not only makes the \$1000 child tax credit

permanent, but also prevents the credit from decreasing to \$700.

In addition to extending this tax credit, low income families would also realize an increased benefit. My legislation would increase the child tax refund to 15% of adjusted earned income, a 50% increase. Under the current law, the child tax credit only allows refunds of the credit up to 10%.

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My legislation also helps our military men and women serving in harms way by making eligible hazardous (combat) pay as earned income for the purposes of calculating the refundable portion of the child tax credit. Currently, hazardous pay is not considered taxable income, thereby eliminating the opportunity for many military families to take full advantage of the child tax credit.

It is time to let working families keep more of what they earn by paying less in taxes. American families need tax relief not just for the next few years, but for good. As families plan their budgets, pay their bills, and invest in their children's future, they need certainty in the tax code, not tax increases.

*The Child Tax Credit Preservation and Expansion Act of 2004* will soon be considered by the US Senate. It is my hope that this legislation will reach President Bush's desk sooner rather than later to help our economy prosper and allow more American families to enjoy tax relief.

## Porter Hears Testimony on "Gas Prices in the West" During Congressional Hearing



Working with my colleague, Subcommittee Chairman Doug Ose of California, I participated in a Congressional hearing on gasoline prices in the West. The House Government Reform Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources, and Regulatory Affairs held a Congressional hearing in Henderson to examine the recent increases in gasoline prices in three western states: Nevada, California, and Arizona.

Held at the Henderson Convention Center on Friday, May 28, 2004, the

hearing was entitled "Easing Pain at the Gasoline Pump: Finding Solutions for Western Woes." The hearing considered past, present, and future issues affecting gasoline supply and prices in California, Arizona, and Nevada, and also examined the effect of gasoline prices on consumers and on the States' economies. I had the opportunity to hear testimony from experts from each of these states including Mr. Richard Burdette, Energy Advisor to Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn.

The recent increase in gas prices run the risk of harming our tourism based economy here in Southern Nevada. Roughly half the visitors who travel to our region come by automobile.

Nevada is directly linked to the California market for our petroleum and we are deeply affected by changes that occur within this market. Ultimately we need a comprehensive energy policy with multiple and innovative solutions that include more fuel infrastructure, renewable energy, and information to help consumers make informed choices.

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# Congressional Hearing Held on Porter Schools SAFE Act



Congressman Porter serves on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce

On Monday, May 24, 2004, the House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competitiveness held a field hearing on legislation I introduced in Congress last year, HR 2649, the "Schools Safely Acquiring Faculty Excellence (SAFE) Act of 2003.

My bill would require the Secretary of Education to encourage states to participate in a national criminal information sharing system.

Currently, 21 states have ratified the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact, created in 1998,

which establishes a system of information sharing for states to perform background checks on individuals applying for sensitive and secure employment. Included in this group are those individuals who perform any service in close connection with our nation's children.

As the Clark County School District continues to grow by nearly 15,000 students a year, the need for school faculty and staff grows as well, often requiring our school districts to hire individuals from outside of Nevada. As more states participate in this program, parents and school administrators can feel safe that the newly hired individuals will pose no threat to Nevada's youngsters.

The hearing was held in the board room of the Clark County School District Education Center, and witnesses included Dr. George Ann Rice (Clark County School District Associate Superintendent for Human Resources), Ms. Carol Lark (Principal, CP Squires Elementary), Ronald Lopez (Deputy Executive Director, Clark County Education Association), and Mrs. DJ Stutz (President Nevada State Parents/Teachers Association and member of National Board of the PTA).

## Porter Hosts Business Workshop "Growing Your Business in Southern Nevada"

As a small family business owner for over 20 years, I know first hand the important role that small businesses play in our nation's economy. For that reason, I recently hosted a workshop to help businesses in Southern Nevada. Joining with me on May 26 at the Paseo Verde Library in Henderson were more than 60 interested participants.

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Congressman Porter was joined by Ms. Cheryl Mills, Associate Deputy Administrator for Entrepreneurial Development for SBA and Mr. Michael Graham, Deputy State Director for the Nevada Small Business Development Center

Small businesses are an important source of new jobs and provide a continual source of innovation. When small businesses succeed, our economy grows.

Assisting me in organizing this event were the Nevada Small Business Development Center (NSBDC) and the US Small Business Administration (SBA). Also present were representatives from the Nevada Microenterprise Initiative, the Nevada Procurement Outreach Program, Clark County Business Development, and SCORE. In addition, Ms. Cheryl Mills, the Associate Deputy Administrator for Entrepreneurial Development for the SBA offered her advice and expertise during a special presentation.

"Growing Your Business in Southern Nevada" addressed issues such as how to start and grow a business, financing, help for minority business owners, and what resources are available to assist business owners. If you missed this workshop but would like more information on the issues that were addressed, please contact my Henderson, NV office at 702-387-4941.

## Porter Announces Grant for McCarran International Airport



Congressman Porter is a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

On May 14, 2004 I was proud to announce a grant in the amount of \$24.4 million from the US Department of Transportation for airfield improvements at McCarran International Airport.

I welcome this needed funding for McCarran. I extend my personal thanks to Secretary of Transportation Norm Minetta and FAA Administrator Marion Blakey for recognizing our needs. As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Aviation, I worked to pass the Vision-100 bill that has made millions of dollars of additional funding available for McCarran. I plan to continue this work to enhance our air links to the rest of the county.

The grant will be used to enhance safety and capacity projects for the airport's airfield including rehabilitating runways and taxiways, and it will provide for airfield lighting and signage. As one of the nation's top ten busiest airports these improvements will be of great assistance to McCarran and to the economy of Southern Nevada.

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# Porter Co-Chairs Congressional "Stop DUI" Caucus



In order to highlight new bipartisan efforts in Congress and to kick off a nationwide anti-DUI media campaign, I joined with fellow Nevadan US Representative Shelly Berkley to launch the new *Congressional Stop DUI Caucus*. As co-chair of the new caucus, I joined with other Members of Congress and the Presidents of the National Commission Against Drunk Driving (NCADD) and the

National Broadcasters Association (NAB) for a kick-off news conference on Capitol Hill designed to raise awareness about the dangers of drunk driving at the beginning of the summer holiday season.

I believe Congress must take an active role in preventing deaths and injuries caused by driving under the influence of alcohol. This senseless crime cuts short lives and destroys families. In 2002 alone, 171 people were killed in alcohol related crashes in our home state of Nevada. Nearly 3 million vehicle miles are traveled by automobiles in the US, raising the risk of DUI fatalities as that figure continues to grow. The Stop DUI Caucus will help to stimulate renewed national action and increase the public's attention to this major health and safety concern.

Also in attendance was Ms. Sandy Heverly, the Executive Director of Stop DUI and a native of Southern Nevada. "I appreciate the steadfast support from Representatives Porter and Berkley in combating drunk driving. By co-chairing the Congressional Stop DUI Caucus they are helping our nation by raising the awareness of a deadly killer just in time for the summer travel season when thousands of more vehicles are on the road. Representatives Porter and Berkley should be commended for all they have done to help educate the public about the impact of driving under the influence and I look forward to working with them to continue their efforts" said Heverly.

By launching the new Stop DUI Caucus before the Memorial Day weekend, we hope to bring new energy and awareness to the issue, particularly the alarming increase in alcohol related highway deaths during the summer months. The jump in deaths during these months – which include the holidays of Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day – is so striking they have been called the "100 Deadly Days."

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## Contact Me

Should you require any additional information, if you would like to inform me of your views, or if you require assistance with your interactions with the Federal Government, please contact me anytime in either my Henderson, NV or Washington, DC office. You can also find information available online at [www.house.gov/Porter](http://www.house.gov/Porter).